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Plain Talk

**for parents
about your
1 to 2 year old**

Understanding your 1 to 2 year old

Every child and parent is unique. This brochure highlights some general patterns of growth and development that apply to most children.

As you watch, listen to, and play with your child, you will discover when she or he is ready for new activities and skills. You will find your own ways to use old and new ideas, to fit your individual personality, your family life, and your child's needs.

General Traits

- Explores everything by touching, tasting, carrying
- Can usually turn a few pages of a large picture book
- Language varies a lot, words may include "Mama," "Dada," "Ball," "No"
- Likes hugs, smiles and kisses
- May nap less than as an infant
- Imitates adult actions, words and noises
- Helps feed him or herself

What a Parent Can Do

- Allow your child freedom to move and explore.
- Keep your house safe for your child. (It helps to go through the house on your hands and knees.) Put breakable and dangerous things out of reach.
- Keep poisons, medications and cleaning solutions in a locked cupboard. Keep the Poison Center number on hand for emergencies.
- Talk with your child just as if the two of you were carrying on a conversation. This helps your child learn to talk and understand.
- Play the "name" game by pointing to things and saying the names aloud.
- Save "no" for important matters. When you say "no," explain why. "No - the stove is hot," or "No - fire will burn you."
- Accept normal childhood spills and bumps without fuss.
- Respect your child's own eating habits. Tastes and appetite change from day to day. Use small portions. Don't force your child to eat.
- Drop the idea of toilet training your child until at least two years of age.
- Enjoy playing with your child (peek-a-boo, singing, dancing, rolling a ball).

Toys for the 1-2 year old

Pull toys	Nest of circular plastic cups (to fit and take apart, fill and dig)
Push toys	
Balls	Wooly or soft cloth animals and dolls (eyes should be painted or embroidered, not buttons)
Blocks	
Water toys	Books (cloth and heavy cardboard with familiar objects and bright colors)
Pocketbook	
Boxes (simple ones to open and close)	Pots and pans with covers